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Tutoring Program Helping At-Risk Students to Advance

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- What started off as a unique job opportunity for college students to earn money has slowly progressed into a strong tutoring program that helps local children thrive and advance at Cedarville Elementary School.

Every year, Cedarville University students tutor Cedarville elementary students who are struggling in math and reading.

"The tutoring has helped 100% of third graders at Cedarville Elementary School pass the state-mandated third grade reading test, which is required for advancement to the fourth grade," said Stephanie Cronin, assistant director of financial aid at Cedarville University. "It also allows for extra support to pass state-required tests, such as American history and government at the high school level."

The partnership originated from the relationship between Dr. Margaret Grigorenko, professor of education at Cedarville University, and Cedarville elementary reading specialist Lisa Clark. "I proposed the idea to Lisa and she and the principal have taken the initiative and built a strong program," said Grigorenko.

The tutoring program has continued to help develop student achievement. Because the program is directly funded by the federal government through federal work study funds, it essentially provides tutoring at no cost to the district for at-risk students who need additional academic support, noted Cronin.

The program also benefits Cedarville University's financial aid office, which must provide evidence that at least 7% of the federal work-study budget is spent on projects that benefit the local off-campus community.

Approximately 35 Cedarville University students have provided tutoring services to Cedarville Elementary School every year since the inception of the program. Tutors must qualify for federal work study and go through an interview process. After initial training, Cedarville University students tutor elementary students during the regular school day one-on-one in reading and math.

"I really credit Cedarville University for the success of our students in this program," commented Mark Gainer, principal at Cedarville Elementary School. Gainer notes that teachers would be unable to provide the same level of support that the tutors give one-on-one with the students enrolled in tutoring. It is because of the tutoring program that the students and teachers are successful.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,380 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.